WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. OF L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
HEADQUARTERS
801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.
FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

No. 45.

WILL AID TEXTILE WORKERS

Washington, Feb. 10.--The Executive Board of the United Textile Workers of America has decided to give all assistance possible to the striking textile workers in Lawrence, Mass., and has issued a statement and appeal for aid. The Executive Board requested the A. F. of L. to indorse its appeal. In answer thereto the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor wired John Golden, President of the United Textile Workers' Union, as follows: "The Executive Council of the A. F. of L. approves the statement issued in regard to the Textile Workers' strike in Lawrence and gives its hearty endorsement to the appeal for funds in the aid of the struggling men and women and their dependents of Lawrence. It is earnestly hoped that Labor and our friends will promptly respond. May success attend the protest, the strike and the movement. You may use this endorsement on your circular appeal." All funds should be sent to James R. Menzie, Treasurer, 184 Broadway, Lawrence, Mass. Money thus forwarded will reach the duly accredited headquarters of the American Federation of Labor and the United Textile Workers of America, and expended exclusively in aid of the strikers.

PAYMENT CHICAGO SLUGGERS DENIED

Muscatine, Ia., Feb. 10.--During the Button Workers' strike in this city, Chicago sluggers were imported for the purpose of intimidating the button factory strikers. The County assumed the responsibility of paying them. An injunction was secured prohibiting the county from making the payments and a decision has just been handed down declaring that the expenditure of money for this purpose is unlawful. This decision has had an electrifying effect on the strikers.

STREET CAR STRIKE PENDING

Chicago, Feb. 10.--The employes of the Chicago railway companies have demanded the immediate dismissal of a new superintendent. It is stated that this new manager is preparing to dismiss all of the men who are earning thirty cents an hour. The men receive pay in accordance with their length of service, and it is stated that the evident purpose is to dismiss the old men in order to secure a reduction of wages for the company.

BRITAIN'S MINERS

London, Feb. 10.—The number of ballots cast by the miners on the question of establishing a minimum wage and to back up the demand by a strike if a mutual agreement cannot be arrived at was very large. The total vote cast was 561,722, of which 445,801 were affirmative votes as against 115,921 negative votes. At present the outlook is good for an amicable adjustment of the controversy, apparently the coal mining operators realizing that with the tremendous vote cast that feeling is at such a pitch that if it comes to the point of a strike the entire industries of England will be paralyzed.

FAVOR RIGID LAWS

Washington, Feb. 10.—Arguments favoring Congressional legislation restricting immigration and having as the chief restriction strict enforcement of the illiteracy test were recently advanced by representatives of the Junior Order of American Mechanics before the Committee on Immigration and Naturalization of the House. Rev. Lichliter, Chief Clerk of the Agricultural Department of Pennsylvania, was the chief spokesman. During his remarks the Reverend gentleman declared that the foreign laborer could live under conditions and circumstances where it would be impossible for an American laborer to exist, and quoted from a report by President Samuel Gompers regarding existing conditions in the anthracite coal regions of Western Pennsylvania, which declared that European labor has almost supplanted American labor in the mines.

ENGLAND'S STRIKES LAST YEAR

London, Feb. 10.—One of the most prominent features in labor circles last year was the number of strikes which prevailed. In the coal mining industries employment was very good on the whole; the engineering trade was very good. From statistics available from the Board of Trade, it is reported that the workmen lost 10,250,000 days. There were 864 trade disputes involving, directly and indirectly, 931,050 workmen. The stoppages of work exceeded the average for the past ten years. There is nothing strange in this greater activity, from the fact that workmen realize that they stand a greater chance of raising their wages and shortening their hours when work is good than when it is not, and this has been the reason why the English workmen have entered these contests.

MR. MORRISON'S TESTIMONY

Washington, Feb. 10.—"I am satisfied that the cause of organized labor has not been injured in the least by the testimony I gave before the Federal Grand Jury at Indianapolis," asserted Secretary Morrison upon his return. "I gave the Grand Jury all the information at my command, and the books of the American Federation of Labor were thrown open to the probers. If anything, I am confident that the cause of labor will be benefited by the results. Quite naturally, I cannot divulge the nature of the testimony I gave before the Grand Jury. We have nothing to conceal and quite willingly gave the probers all the information possible."

At Sacramento, Cal., the Cement Workers obtained the Saturday half holiday and increased wages.

PLEAD NOT GUILTY.

Los Angeles, Feb. 10--Olaf Tveitmoe, Anton Johannsen and E. A. Clancy of San Francisco, and J. B. Munsey of Salt Lake City, pleaded not guilty, when arraigned before Judge Olin Wellborn in the United States District Court, on indictments charging them with entering into a conspiracy to transport dynamite on railroad trains in violation of the interstate commerce laws. The attorney for the accused men informed the court that his clients desired a speedy trial.

GRAND JURY TO REPORT

Indianapolis, Feb. 10--The continuous performance of the Federal Grand Jury, it is stated, is shortly to be brought to a close. Press dispatches carry the information that between thirty and forty indictments have been drawn up against alleged conspirators in the dynamiting cases. It is claimed that the curtain will be elevated in a few days, and those who have been indicted brought into the limelight.

SIXTEEN-HOUR LAW VIOLATED

Washington, Feb. 10,--The government has brought action in the Federal District court against the Erie railroad for violation of the sixteen-hour law. The suits involve fifty-one offenses, the period covered by the alleged violations extending from April to September 1911. The penalties, if conviction is secured, will total $500 for each offense.

BANQUET TO FEDERATION OFFICIALS

Washington, Feb.10--Washington's birthday, Feb. 22., has been fixed as the date on which the Central Labor Union of this city will banquet President Samuel Gompers, and Secretary Frank Morrison, at the Ebbitt House. A large number of Members of Congress will also be present.

THE CONTEMPT CASE

Washington, Feb.10.--Testimony in the contempt case of President Gompers, Secretary Morrison and Vice President Mitchell has been in process of being presented for a number of days. President Gompers has been on the witness stand and will be followed by Secretary Morrison and Vice-President Mitchell.

Glass Plant Closes

Coffeyville, Kan., Feb. 10--The Kansas Window Glass Plant has shut down, throwing into idleness about 200 men. In this section of the country natural gas is used largely for manufacturing and domestic purposes, and the reason assigned for the shutting of this plant is poor gas pressure.

HEARST BUYS NEWSPAPER

Atlanta, Ga., Feb. 10--The Atlanta Georgian announces that that paper has been purchased by William Randolph Hearst. This paper was established six years ago.

MEETING PLACE CHANGED

London, Feb. 10.—As the result of a referendum vote, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers has decided by a majority of over 11,000, to hold the special delegate convention fixed for Whitsuntide at Manchester in preference to Glasgow. This special meeting has been called for the purpose of revising the constitution of the Society. Thirty-five divisions, including the United States, Canada, Australia, and South Africa, will be represented at the meeting. The proposed new rules have been issued and range from a proposition to give money prizes for suggestions calculated to improve the organization and administration of the Society to a proposal that control of the Society should be vested in an annual general delegate meeting. At present the organization is conducted by an executive committee, a permanent body sitting in London.

FOR COAL MINING CONTROL

Washington, Feb. 10.—Representatives of the coal operators in Indiana, Illinois, and Pennsylvania urged the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee recently to create an interstate Trade Commission with the same control over the coal mining industry that the Interstate Commerce Commission has over transportation.

BALLET GIRLS ON STRIKE

Paris, Feb. 10.—There is at present a strike being conducted by the "Ladies and gentlemen of the ballet." Several dancers have demanded an increase in salary. They at present receive between $550 and $600 and they want an advance of from $100 to $150. The cost of living in Paris has grown enormously and this is assigned as the reason for demanding a higher wage and endeavoring to get same by strike.

NEW SAFETY DEVICE

Darlington, Eng., Feb. 10.—A device has just been invented designed to make it impossible for trains to run past danger signals, and effectively prevent collisions. It is stated that it is an invention in which the human element, which plays so vital a part in present railway workings, is entirely obliterated, for neither the engineer, the fireman, or trainman, nor any other person has the faintest responsibility in its working. It is claimed that by means of this invention a train traveling at any speed can be brought to a standstill by a very simple automatic electrical device which is worked in conjunction with the ordinary signals. The apparatus consists of a plunger or shoe attached to one of the railway lines and connected with the signaling box. A contact brush underneath the cab of the engine and a magnet and tension spring connects with the throttle of the engine. When the signal is put against the train, the shoe or plunger is thrust upward from the metals so that if the engineer fails to notice the danger signal, the contact brush underneath the cab of the engine touches the plunger. This completes the electric current and automatically the tension spring forces the closing of the throttle. By the addition of a magnetic coil the same apparatus can operate the air brakes, which can be put on automatically when the contact brush touches the plunger.

KIRBY HAS A SPASM

Washington, Feb. 10.—Recently, John Kirby, President of the National Association of Manufacturers, addressed 150 Wisconsin members of the Association in Milwaukee. During his remarks, aside from taking numerous raps at the organizations of labor, he commented on the McNamara case as follows: "Developments may, and they may not, directly connect the President and the Executive Board of the American Federation of Labor with the awful conspiracy. Be that as it may, enough is known to convince any sane person they knew all and sanctioned its execution." Those who are conversant with the violent utterances of this gentleman, know that it could not be expected that he would hold any different view. His expression of opinion, however, does not carry any weight with it. If the hostile interests to labor could have even in a remote way connected the officials of the American Federation of Labor with the crime, it would have been done a long time ago.

SHORTAGE OF SADDLE MAKERS

London, Feb. 10.—There is a shortage of saddle makers in this city, the colonies and on the continent. Recently an effort was made by a manufacturer from Paris to secure six additional men in this city. He was unable to find a single man. The scarcity is due to the fact that boys have not been put to the trade, a condition of affairs for which the manufacturers are partly responsible. Fear of the growing automobile trade has had its effect, but it is likely that the riding saddle industry will suffer greatly.

ORGANIZING CAMPAIGN ON

Joplin, Feb. 10.—Joplin is experiencing a revival. An organizer for the Electrical Workers is in the city giving his time to that trade. An organizer from the Stationary Engineers has spent a number of weeks here and succeeded in re-establishing an Engineers' local and in organizing three other locals at Cartersville, Webb City, and Carl Junction. There is an opportunity among a number of other trades for effective work, so it is stated, if organizers were placed in the field.

WOMEN IN LIGHTHOUSES

Washington, Feb. 10.—There are twenty-seven women in the service of the bureau of lighthouses under the department of Commerce and Labor employed as keepers and assistant keepers at the lighthouse stations along the coasts of the United States. The keepers receive $510 to $800 per annum, the assistant keepers, $480 to $600; the laborers, $96 to $214 and other laborers, $180 to $250. Women keepers and assistant keepers receive 30 cents per diem for rations, in addition to salary. There are 5,500 male employes in the service, their average salary being $600.

TO BAR BUTTER

Cleveland, Feb. 10.—It is reported that at a meeting of the Executive Board of the Women's Clubs a resolution was adopted pledging all members to abstain from butter for one week. It is said that this action involves 11,000 club women of the city and their families, or an estimated number of 55,000 persons.

PRISON CONTRACTORS TO VACATE

Columbus, O., Feb. 10.—The Ohio Board of Administration has given notice to the E. B. Landman Company and the Columbus Bolt Works to vacate the State penitentiary not later than April 15. Thus the contract system comes to an end in the State penal institutions. Here is a striking instance of the way in which prison contractors in collusion with boards of control and prison officials friendly to them can continue the iniquitous contract system in violation of the law. In 1905 the legislature was favorable to a bill introduced by Representative Wertz for the abolition of the contract system. The then existing contracts had only a year longer to run. Seeing that the bill would pass, the Board of Control and the Contractors cancelled the existing contracts and entered into new ones for as long a term as the law would permit, five years. The bill was enacted, but the contracts could not be abrogated, thus continuing them until 1910. Even then, the contractors were allowed to operate on the plea that they had unfinished material. Then the press service of the contractors sent statements broadcast that if the convicts were not employed they would go insane, etc. This story was exposed by one of the Press agencies and the Ohio Federation of Labor. Finally the Board of Control was abolished by law and a new Board of Administration, free from the influences of the contractors, was appointed. Thus for this long period, after the enactment of the law abolishing the system, the last contractor will have taken his departure from the penitentiary.

BILL MODIFIED

Washington, Feb. 10.—The Senate Immigration Committee has modified the Dillingham Immigration Bill in a manner calculated to remove the possibility of recurrence of trouble with Japan. Under the terms of the bill, originally reported from the Committee, it excluded Chinese and Japanese laborers, thus barring laborers from countries whose subjects cannot become naturalized Americans. Under the general agreement now in force between this country and Japan the State Department protested and in accordance with that protest the bill was modified.

CAMPAIGN FOR AFFILIATION

Utica, N. Y., Feb. 10.—The officers of the New York State Federation of Labor are engaged in a campaign to induce all the local unions in the state to affiliate with the state body. Much important legislation will come before the present session of the legislature, among which is a workmen's compensation bill in the shape of an industrial accident insurance law and a fifty-four hour work week for women and children. With all the unions of the state members of the st ate federation it is claimed it will not be difficult to secure this legislation.

URGE WOMEN TO ORGANIZE

Washington, Feb. 10.—Miss Lenora O'Reilly of New York, lecturing before the civic committees of the District Federation of Women's clubs in this city recently, urged the women of Washington to support the laboring women of the country in their efforts to organize into trade unions. It was stated that more than 5,000,000 women are gaining a livelihood as wage earners.

UNIONS TO COMBINE

London, Feb. 10.—At a meeting of the executive officials of the Railway unions recently held to consider the proposed scheme of amalgamation, an agreement was reached. In accordance with plans outlined the scheme will be submitted to a ballot of all the members. The Locomotive Enginemen and Firemen's Association were not represented at this meeting and are therefore not included in the plan of amalgamation, this latter organization favoring federation instead. The unions affected comprise the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, the General Railway Workers' Union and the Signalmen's and Pointsmen's Union.

MAY ASK CHANGE IN STATUTES

Boston, Feb. 10.—Congressman James Curley has asserted that if the federal authorities at Washington sustain the ruling of District Attorney French, permitting alien seamen to land in Boston and perform the work of the striking longshoremen, he will endeavor to have the immigration laws amended. The 3,000 longshoremen on strike in Boston have been out a month with only one desertion. According to the Chamber of Commerce, eleven steamships have been compelled to leave this port without a pound of cargo, and freight traffic is being diverted to New York as a result.

HIGH COST OF LIVING

Washington, Feb. 10.—President Taft in a recent special message called attention to the high cost of living and suggested an international inquiry into the subject. He says: "There has been a strong movement among business men and others interested in economic investigation, to secure the appointment of an international commission to look into the cause for the high prices of the necessities of life." The President further states, that the preliminary conference itself will entail a comparatively small expense and that the existing Bureaus in this and other governments could carry on the work with little additional expense.

CARPENTERS WIN STRIKE

Kingsville, Tex., Feb. 10.—The carpenters of this city made a demand last fall for a raise in wages to take effect Jan. 1. The contractors refused and the carpenters went on strike, remaining out six days, at the end of which time a satisfactory agreement was reached and they returned to work.

ELECTRICIANS WIN RAISE

Boston, Feb. 10.—The Electrical Workers' controversy in this city, which was referred to an arbitration committee, has been settled. The Electricians received a raise from $4.00 to $4.40 per day.

PITTSBURGH GARMENT WORKERS

Pittsburgh, Feb. 10.—The garment workers of this city are negotiating for a new agreement with their employers. Victor Altman, member of the Executive Board of the United Garment Workers, is assisting in the negotiations.

TEAMSTERS ORGANIZE AND GET RAISE

Fall River, Mass., Feb. 10.--The teamsters in this city have organized a local union with a good membership and immediately thereafter commenced an agitation for an increase in wages which has been successful. All drivers of single wagons procured an increase of $1 a week, and all drivers of double hitches an increase of $1.50 a week, together with an agreement which calls for time and a half for all labor performed on Sundays and holidays.

HEARINGS ON SEAMEN'S BILL CLOSED

Washington, Feb. 10--The hearings on the Seamen's Bill before the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee of the House have been closed. Ship owners from the Great Lakes and the Atlantic occupied four days in opposing the bill before the Committee. The Seamen's unions of Boston and Philadelphia have just recently adopted resolutions favoring the bill.

WAIST MAKERS TO STRIKE

New York, Feb. 10--A vote has just been concluded in the Ladies Waist and Dress Makers' Union and Cutters' Union on a proposition to strike, and has been overwhelmingly carried. The strike, if finally called, will probably involve 10,000 members. A definite day has not yet been set on which the strike will be called.

MINERS' SCALE NOT SETTLED

Indianapolis, Feb. 10--The conference between the coal miners and operators ended with the miners demanding an increase of ten cents a ton, and the operators holding out for a decrease of the same amount. The present contract expires April 1, and attempts will be made before that time to reach an agreement.

TO DISCUSS HIGHER PAY

New York, Feb. 10--A committee composed of seven railroad presidents is discussing with the general managers of their roads, the demand made by the locomotive engineers for higher wages. It is stated that the Committee will meet for consultation Feb. 23. The engineers in the Eastern districts have asked for an advance of fifteen per cent.

WOULD LIMIT HOURS

Washington, Feb. 10--A resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, granting Congress the power to pass laws regulating the hours of labor generally throughout the United States, has been introduced in the House by Congressman Samuel W. McCall, of Massachusetts.

BERT H. CONNORS ACQUITTED

Los Angeles, Feb. 10--Bert H. Connors, one of the men indicted for dynamiting the Hall of Records in this city, has been acquitted.

RAILROAD WRECK

Washington, Feb. 10.--Railroad wrecks continue to be a feature in the press dispatches. Five passengers were injured when a Pennsylvania train was derailed on the Belvidere division near Phillipsburg, N.J., a few days ago. Twelve persons were injured when a passenger train on the Norfolk and Western Railroad was wrecked near Petersburg, Va. A broken rail caused the derailment of four coaches on a Big Four Passenger train west of Lebanon, Ohio, six men and three women being injured. Fifteen people were injured on a Norfolk and Western passenger train near Columbus when it was derailed. The wreck was due to an arch bar breaking under the tender of the engine, the bar striking a crossing plank which derailed the train and tore up the track for 500 feet. Two dead and one injured as the result of a wreck on the Lehigh Valley, which occurred near Flagtown, N. J. The cause of this wreck was the bursting of the boiler and a head-on collision which occurred immediately after.

CARD ORDER TO STAND

Washington, Feb. 10.--It is announced by the War Department that should the employes of the Rock Island, Ill., arsenal strike because of the cards to be issued inaugurating the Taylor system, the Government will atempt to secure other employes, and failing in that, will transfer the work to another arsenal. It is further stated, that instructions have been sent to the Commandant at Rock Island to install the job card system as he was ordered to do.

TO QUIT THE MOVEMENT

Washington, Feb. 10.--In the Stonecutters' Journal for this month, General Secretary-Treasurer James F. McHugh announces that he will not be a candidate for re-election. Mr. McHugh has held his present office for twenty years, and is known by the members of our movement as a thorough-going, outspoken trade unionist, without any attached isms. The retirement of Mr. McHugh will be a distinct loss to the labor movement of this country.

POSTAL REPORT MADE

Washington, Feb. 10.--The report of the Postal Commission on second class rates has been submitted to President Taft by Associate Justice Hughes of the United States Supreme Court, who is President of the Commission. All of the trade union journals throughout the country are interested in the final determination of this question, Postmaster General Hitchcock having previously made a recommendation radically raising the rates on second class publications.

STRIKERS WINNING

New York, Feb.10.--The strike of the Cutting Die and Cutter Makers for the 48 hour work week, which has been in progress in this city since the first of the year, has been adjusted. One firm in Brockton, Mass., has also conceded the 48 hour week. The shorter hour work week has now been permanently established in New York, Baltimore, Md., Lynn, Stoneham, and Haverhill, Mass.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS' COMMISSION

Washington, Feb. 10.--On Feb. 2, President Taft transmitted to Congress a special message covering numerous subjects. Among the recommendations included in the message was one for the appointment of a Commission on Industrial Relations. The following are excerpts from the message: "The extraordinary growth of industry in the past two decades and its revolutionary changes have raised new and vital questions as to the relations between employers and wage earners which have become matters of pressing public concern. ✕ ✕ ✕ Any interruption to the normal and peaceful relations between employer and wage earner involves public discomfort and in many cases public disaster. Such interruptions become, therefore, quite as much a matter of public concern as restraint of trade or monopoly. Industrial relations concern the public for a double reason. We are directly interested in the maintenance of peaceful and stable industrial conditions for the sake of our own comfort and well-being; but society is equally interested, in its sovereign civic capacity, in seeing that our institutions are effectively maintaining justice and fair dealing between any classes of citizens whose economic interests may seem to clash. ✕ ✕ ✕ Numerous special investigations, official and unofficial, have revealed conditions in more than one industry which have immediately been recognized on all sides as entirely out of harmony with accepted American standards. It is probable that to a great extent the remedies for these conditions, so far as the remedies involve legislation, lie in the field of State action; b ut such a comprehensive inquiry as is necessary to furnish a basis for intelligent action must be undertaken on national initiative and must be nation-wide in its scope. ✕ ✕ ✕ One legitimate object of such an official investigation and report is to enlighten and inform public opinion, which of itself will often induce or compel the reform of unjust conditions or the abatement of unreasonable demands. ✕ ✕ ✕ There is already available much information on certain aspects of the subject in the reports of the Federal and State Bureaus of Labor and in other official and unofficial publications. One essential part of the proposed inquiry would naturally be to assemble, digest and interpret this information so far as it bears upon our present industrial conditions. In addition to this, the commission should inquire into the general conditions of labor in our principal industries, into the existing relations between employers and employees in those industries, into the various methods which have been tried for maintaining mutually satisfactory relations between employees and employers and for avoiding or adjusting trade disputes, and into the scope, methods and resources of Federal and State Bureaus of Labor and the methods by which they might more adequately meet the responsibilities which, through the work of the commission above recommended, would be more clearly brought to light and defined."

LOCKOUT ANTICIPATED

London, Feb. 10.--Indications are to the effect that there will shortly be a lockout of dock laborers on the Clyde. The ship owners have informed the dock men that unless they consent to the intervention of Sir George Askwith on behalf of the Board of Trade, there will probably be a lockout. The men have absolutely declined to accept Board of Trade intervention and have informed the ship owners that they propose to maintain their position in the present controversy, which is over a readjustment of wages and conditions.